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AUTHORITY

OAG ltr 29 Apr 1980

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (26 Dec 68) FOR OT UT683148 31 December 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 37th Signal Battalion (Spt), Period Ending 31 July 1968

AD845612

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2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure that the Army realizes current benefits from lessons learned during recent operations.

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BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

JAN 10 1969

1 Incl
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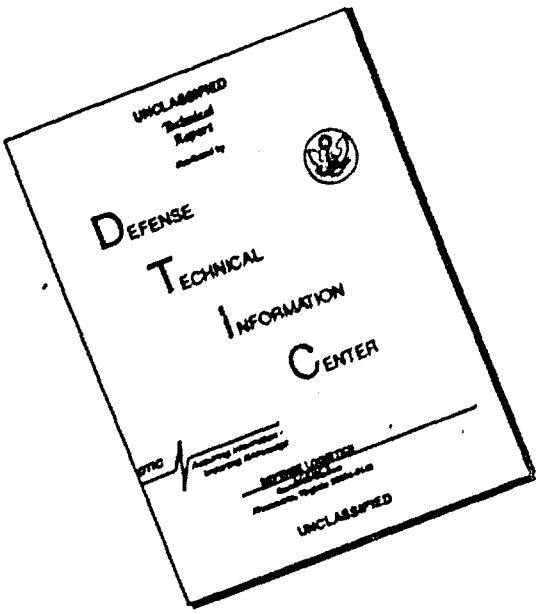

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 37TH SIGNAL BATTALION (SPT)
APO 96337

SCCPV-NG-DN-OP 11 August 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 37th Signal Battalion (Spt) for Period Ending 31 July 1968, RSC CSFOR-65 (R1)

Commanding General
USARV
ATIN: AVHGC-DST
APO 96375

1. Section 1, Operation: Significant Activities.

a. The 37th Signal Battalion's mission is to provide communications support to III MAF, the advisory effort and other Free World Forces in the I Corps Tactical Zone. The Battalion also provides area communications support to logistics complexes, U.S. Government agencies located in the I Corps Tactical Zone, and performs other communication missions as assigned by the Commanding Officer, 21st Signal Group. The mission of the 37th Signal Battalion did not change during this period.

b. On 29 May 1968 this Battalion suffered one WIA at Duc Pho Signal Site. The WIA was a result of a mortar attack involing approximately 60 rounds landing on and around the site.

c. On 13 July 1968, the Battalion was visited by Brigadier General Robert D. Terry, Commanding General, United States Army Strategic Communications Command, Pacific.

d. During the quarter there were changes in the Commanding Officer, Executive Officer, S-1, S-3, Commanding Officer of Company C and Commanding Officer of HHD. Inclosure 1 provides an up to date organization structure of the Battalion. The Battalion unit changes were as follows:

FOR OT UT
683148

Incl 1

SCOPV-NG-DN-OP 11 August 1968
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 37th Signal Battalion (Spt) for Period Ending 31 July 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

(1) The 517th Signal Detachment (Tropo) was detached from the 337th Signal Company and attached for operational control to the 63rd Signal Battalion. This unit operates the Dong Ha terminal of the Phu Bai - Dong Ha system.

(2) The 544th Signal Detachment (Tropo) was detached from the 63rd Signal Battalion on 16 July and returned to Da Nang for equipment rehabilitation and reconstitution.

e. The Battalion is at 101.1% of its authorized strength. Though current personnel resources are substantially equal to requirements (numerically) there still remains a disparity in certain critical MOS areas. Key MOS shortages in MOS 26L, 31M, 36E, 52B, 72B and 72C continued to exist throughout the quarter. Radio operators (05B) and teletype operators (05C) continue to cross-train and work in critical MOS areas to ease the workload due to personnel shortages.

f. Personnel requisitions were accurate and timely, yet only approximately 70% of the entire requisitions for the quarter were filled. Fill has been inadequate in the following critical MOS areas:

(1) 26L (E-4, E-5, E-6)

(2) 31M (E-4)

(3) 36E (E-4, E-5)

(4) 52B (E-4)

(5) 72B (E-4, E-5)

(6) 72C (E-4, E-5)

h. The turnover in personnel was as follows:

	LOSSES	GAINS
OFFICERS	8 (1 LTC, 1 MAJ, 1 CPT, 6 LT)	11 (1 LTC, 1 MAJ, 1CPT, 11 LT)
WO	0	1
EM	159	182

i. Appointments: Promotion allocations are consistently adequate and no problem areas exist.

j. Awards and Decorations:

(1) The recognition of outstanding valor and merit by appropriate awards and decorations continued during the quarter. Particularly noteworthy is the award of the Marine Presidential Unit Citation for service to the 544th Signal Detachment (Tropo) which was stationed at Khe Sanh during the period 30 January - 21 March 1968.

(2) Other awards presented during the quarter are:

TYPE OF AWARD	NUMBER
Bronze Star	11
Army Commendation	18
Purple Heart	1

k. Listed below are the major accomplishments of the 37th Signal Battalion during the last quarter. The unit was operational for the entire 92 day period.

(1) The communications center at Da Nang South was relocated to a newly constructed quonset hut in the Da Nang Support Command Compound. The communications center has replaced the AN/MSC-29 configuration which is being rehabilitated and prepared for redeployment. The facility was activated on 29 July 1968.

(2) A UNIVAC 1004-DLT/6 AUTODIN Terminal was installed and activated during the last quarter. The 1004 is located in conjunction with the Da Nang South Communication Center facility in a vanized configuration. The 1004 operates in the card mode at 100 cards per minute and the tape mode at 1200 words per minute. This terminal will service the Da Nang Support Command primarily; however, all subscribers in the area will benefit from its speed of service and low service rate.

(3) Two Mode V AUTODIN terminals were installed at the I Corps Communications Center. These terminals when activated, will provide I Corps subscribers entry into the world wide network through the Nha Trang ASC. An increase in speed and reliability will be realized upon the activation on 6 August 1968.

(4) A new UHF system was installed between Red Beach, Da Nang and the 37th Signal Battalion Compound. This system will replace a poor quality cable between Force Logistics Command and Da Nang. The present channelization request calls for voice, teletype and data to be carried over the system. Activation date of the system is unknown.

(5) A radio teletype net was installed to provide backup for all isolated communications centers. The AN/GRC-26D equipment was on hand at Da Nang and Hoi An, and additional vans were deployed to Tam Ky and Quang Ngai.

(6) During the reporting period an AN/MTC-1 was installed at Duc Pho in support of the 11th Infantry Brigade. Due to the rapid development of the base camp at Duc Pho, a requirement arose to install a greater capacity area switchboard facility. The switchboard is installed in an air conditioned heavily bunkered shelter. It is presently operating at approximately 60% capacity.

(7) At Duc Pho the 37th Signal Battalion installed a AN/GRC-26D at Headquarters Task Force Brown in support of that unit. The radio teletype assemblage operates in a logistical net with the net control station at Qui Nhon. The communications provided by this RATT facility have greatly contributed to the over all success of Task Force Brown.

(8) On 1 June 1968 Microwave system, BBMØ8, was activated between Dong Ha and Quang Tri. This AN/TRC-29 system utilizes 2 each AN/TCC-13's at each terminal providing a 45 channel capability. This microwave system was installed to increase the channel capacity and relieve the two AN/TRC-24's systems that were previously installed between Dong Ha and Quang Tri.

(9) On 13 June 1968, Troposcatter system, BBT17, was inactivated. This system provided a communications link between Phu Bai and Quang Tri but its full potential was not realized. A total of three channels were used from its capacity of twenty-four. The two terminals involved were returned to Battalion assets for further deployment.

(10) On 20 June 1968 troposcatter system, 77UT4J, Da Nang to Phu Bai was inactivated. The system was inactivated after two subgroups from the existing Air Force AN/TRC-66 system were made available for Army Area circuits. Both of the AN/TRC-129 terminal vans were prepared for redeployment upon inactivation.

(11) On 25 June 1968, a Troposcatter system was activated between Hue and Ca Lo. This system was activated to provide increased communications support for the large troop buildup at Landing Zone Stud. Initially this system was programmed with terminals at Ca Lo and Phu Bai, however, tests conducted on the system revealed poor signal levels due to an undesirable profile. Upon the deactivation of the Hue-Khe Sanh system the Hue terminal was re-homed towards Ca Lo and the present system activated. This system is under the operational control of the 63d Signal Battalion.

(12) On 28 June 1968 the Hue - Khe Sanh troposcatter system, 77UT4H, was inactivated. This system which provided high quality communications to the Khe Sanh area was inactivated due to the troop withdrawals from Khe Sanh. The Hue terminal was re-homed towards Ca Lo to activate that system. The terminal and personnel from Khe Sanh were returned to Da Nang for rehabilition.

(13) On 29 June 1968 Troposcatter system BBT22 was activated between Dong Ha and Phu Bai to support a personnel and logistical buildup in the Dong Ha area. To accomplish the mission the 517th Signal Detachment was deployed from Da Nang to Dong Ha. The Phu Bai terminal of the inactivated 77UT4J system was activated at Phu Bai. This system is under the operational control of the 63rd Signal Battalion.

1. Listed below are the communications facilities as of 31 July 1968, which are located in the I Corps Tactical Zone and operated by the 37th Signal Battalion:

(1) Long Lines Communications:

VHF Systems (12 ch)	5
UHF Systems (12 ch)	4
Tropo System (48 Ch)	1
Tropo System (24 ch)	3
Tone Packs (16 ch)	1
Tone Packs (8 ch)	1
VF Circuits	223
Teletype circuits (DC)	30
EAC Circuits	4

(2) Communication Center:

Minor Relays	3
Tributary Stations	3

(3) Telephone Switchboards:

600 Line Manual Switchboard	2
200 Line Manual Switchboard	3
60 Line Manual Switchboard	3

(4) Radio Operations

HF Radio Station	6
SSB Radio Station	2

m. Training:

(1) In addition to the required training conducted during the quarter, the Battalion filled twenty-seven 1st Signal Brigade and 21st Signal Group school quotas.

(2) The AN/GRC-106 radio operator course operated in the past by this Battalion was phased out and the course established at Long Binh.

(3) During this past quarter primary emphasis was placed on cross-training to alleviate the shortage of personnel in critical MOS's.

n. Intelligence:

(1) There was a decrease in enemy activity during the past quarter. There were a total of 32 enemy initiated incidents directly affecting the 37th Signal Battalion Headquarters or its outlying sites. Casualties caused directly as a result of enemy activity were one WIA at Duc Pho.

(2) The number of classified documents on hand at the end of the quarter decreased from last quarter. This reduction was accomplished by destroying non-essential documents. A total of 69 Secret documents are presently on hand.

(3) Physical security continued to improve at the outlying sites and at Battalion Headquarters. Physical security inspections were performed at all companies and sites. The defensive plan for the Battalion Headquarters was reviewed and revised.

SCCFV-NG-DN-OP 11 August 1968
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 37th Signal Battalion (Spt) for Period Ending 31 July 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

o. Logistics:

(1) The loss of operational control of tropo teams north of Da Nang has reduced cargo shipments. Lead times for shipments north from Da Nang have improved from the last quarter. Air shipments to Phu Bai, Dong Ha and Quang Tri have averaged three to seven days lead time while sea shipments have averaged seven to twelve days. Average waiting time to areas south of Da Nang, such as Chu Lai, requires three to five days by air and five to eight days by sea. Air support from the 41st Signal Battalion Aviation Section based in Qui Nhon has averaged one time per week.

(2) The total number of cargo tons handled during the quarter decreased somewhat due to the relatively static deployment of the Battalion. Shipments that involved Transportation Control Movement Documents (TCMD) amounted to 143 short tons. Shipments north were generators for tropo detachments and the relocation of the 517th Tropo Detachment while shipments south were mainly composed of vehicles and communications equipment in van configurations.

(3) The average deadline rate for the quarter has increased slightly from ten percent the previous quarter to eleven percent. Major cause of deadline has been nonavailability of repair parts and components.

(4) 10 KW generators have been deadlined for printed circuit boards, magnetos, relays and engines while 45 KW generators primarily for replacement engines. Operator maintenance is being stressed at all levels in the Battalion to combat the extreme heat and dusty conditions under which the generators operate.

(5) A reallocation of vehicles within the Battalion has been possible due to a reduction in the operational requirements of the 337th Signal Company (Radio Relay). This Battalion has 78.8% of its authorized vehicles. The shortage of vehicles has not seriously hampered this unit in the performance of the mission. The average deadline rate for vehicles has been five percent. Major causes of deadline has been clutches, CV boots, radiators and loose structural members.

(6) Since 1 May this unit has submitted 2,608 requisitions for repair parts and had 810 filled. This is a fill percentage of 31.0%. This organization has 2,874 authorized PLL line items. Of this number 717 or 24.9% are at zero balance. The total number of red ball requisitions submitted during the past quarter was 75. Of this number 11 or 14.5% were filled. This low fill rate has been attributed to inadequate reconciliation by

this unit and inadequate records kept at the DSU. Command action has been taken to correct this situation.

(7) This unit is experiencing major component failure of the transistor in the Voltage Controlled Oscillator of the RF Module utilized in the AN/TRC-129, 129A and 132. The transistor is a Texas Instruments corporation experimental transistor (TIXS-40 Collins part number 352-0765-010). There are three of these transistor in the VCO. Once this transister breaks down (shorts out), other components of the VCC breakdown due to heat caused by excessive current flow. Either this transistor has a short lifetime or the heat dissipation for the transistor is not great enough causing the transistor to breakdown with age. To this date this unit has not been able to obtain this transistor through normal supply channels and does not have the equipment or information available to determine a substitute transistor. This unit also lacks adequate test equipment necessary for the high frequencies of the AN/TRC-129, 129A and 132. Correspondence has been forwarded to higher Headquarters on 30 June 1968 on this particular subject for assistance.

2. Section 2, Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluation, and Recommendations.

a. Personnel. None

b. Operations.

(1) Equipment with inadequate personnel.

(a) OBSERVATION. Vanized communication equipment that arrives for deployment without operational and maintenance personnel places undue stress on the receiving unit which must provide these personnel.

(b) EVALUATION. Equipment commonly operated by TOE 11-500D teams (AN/MTC-9, AN/MSC-73) often arrives for employment without adequate personnel. Training and relocation of sometimes critical personnel must be accomplished prior to functional deployment. This places an unnecessary burden on the operating unit who must absorb the equipment operation utilizing available personnel resources.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That 11-500 TOE teams be activated for each large van configuration.

(2) Bypassing line filters when using TT-76 with KW-7s.

(a) OBSERVATION. At a communication center, TT-76 and TT-4 would operate back to back in local test position but when test was sent through the KW-7 on an in-house loop, the machines would garble.

(b) EVALUATION. The communication center had a one-hundred word a minute TT-76 machine that would work through the KW-7s but when replaced with another machine the new one would not work. A check of both machines for differences revealed that the serviceable TT-76 had both the keyboard and TC line filters by-passed. The filters on the new machine were then by-passed and the equipment operated. A check was made with the crypto repairman. It was discovered that the line filters offered too much resistance to the low level keying of the KW-7s when the KW-7s and TTY machines were separated by long D.C. Loops.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That all line filters be by-passed on teletype-writers operating with secure equipment.

(3) Field Expediency in Repairing of Wave Guide.

(a) OBSERVATIONS. During rocket and mortar attacks, shrapnel will pierce the wave guide and antenna dish of radio communications equipment.

(b) EVALUATION. Upon finding a section of wave guide that has been damaged, and with no spare section readily available, the wave guide can be repaired by wrapping a C-ration, soda, or beer can around the damaged area.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. When repairing a wave guide it is recommended that masking tape be used to secure the can around the damaged section of the wave guide. It is then necessary to wrap rubber tape around the masking tape in order to waterproof the repair. It will be noted that the repaired wave guide will cause some loss of signal strength. A new section of wave guide should be installed as soon as possible.

(4) Mounting a Trope Antenna on a AE 211 Tower.

(a) OBSERVATION: Often it is necessary to mount a Trope antenna on a AE 211 Tower.

(b) EVALUATION. After mounting a trope antenna on a AB211 Tower it was found that the azimuth adjustment could not be fully utilized. The "dish" of the antenna would strike one of the legs of the tower; which would hamper the full utilization of the azimuth adjustment.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That a plank, 4"x12"x8' be bolted, using "U" bolts, to the frame of the tower prior to installing a trope antenna on an AB 211 tower. The upper portion of the antenna mast is then mounted far enough from the tower to allow full utilization of the azimuth adjustment.

(5) Duct system for Air Conditioners

(a) OBSERVATIONS. Often it is necessary to place a communication system which requires an air conditioner, underground for protection of the personnel and equipment. It has been found that without the proper system of ducts for the air conditioner, the air conditioner will become dirty and inoperative. This is detrimental to the proper operation of the communication system.

(b) EVALUATION. When a communications van is placed underground, the blower motor on the air conditioner stirs up a lot of dirt. This dirt is then drawn into the air conditioner through the intake. The presence of this dirt within the air conditioner will cause the blower motor, and compressor, to overheat. Often the blower motor will burn out.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. It is recommended that a "Duct System" be built on the outside of the air conditioner. This duct system should be installed for both the intake and exhaust ports of the air conditioner. The ducts should extend above ground and be large enough to prevent a back pressure on the air conditioner's motors. A filter should be installed on each duct opening to inhibit the entry of dirt into the system. These filters should be cleaned a minimum of once a day, to prevent system blockage.

(6) Replacing cable for Touch-tone (Emergency Action Console) Telephones.

(a) OBSERVATION. The telephone cable that normally is utilized with the touch-tone (Emergency Action Console) phone is not rugged enough to withstand any movement or any extension or relocating the insturment.

(b) EVALUATION. When a new touch tone phone is installed, it has a lead cable that is highly flexible due to its construction which utilizes copper tinsel wrapped around a nylon center. When, even a few relocations of the instrument are made, the conductor coating tears and causes a very poor and at times a non-existent connection.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. If the entire section of telephone cable that is attached to the instrument is replaced with a suitable four-conductor, 22 gauge telephone cable, the problem can be resolved with only one disadvantage; a slightly stiffer lead cable.

c. Training. None

d. Intelligence. None

c. Logistics.

(1) Use of 55 gallon barrels for trenches.

(a) OBSERVATION. In some locations and during certain seasons in the Southeast Asia area, the water level is such that trenches cannot be effectively utilized to interconnect perimeter bunkers.

(b) EVALUATION. Trenches cannot be effective if they are full of water. Also they are prime insect breeding location when filled with stagnent water. A passage that is safe from small arms fire or sniper fire is necessary to interconnect perimeter bunkers for first aid, resupply, and communications purposes.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. Locations with high water levels should use a substitute for the ineffective trench. A continuous row of sand-filled 55gallon barrels with one layer of sandbags between each barrel provides sufficient personnel protection when travelling from one bunker to an adjacent bunker or fighting position. This inhibits observation and therefore affords personnel protection.

(2) Usage of Ink Stencil, Duplicating

(a) OBSERVATION. Although the available stencil ink, stock number 7510-286-1717, for use in duplicating machine is labeled as "climate proof", this type I, oil base ink, is affected by the tropical heat in Vietnam. Because of the heat, a breakdown of the colloidal suspension between the oil base and the ink pigment occurs.

(b) EVALUATION. When the ink reservoir cylinder of the duplicating machine is kept at the full mark as recommended by the manufacturer, an oil base seepage is noticed coming from the ink pad of the machine. Normally the oil base separates from the heavier ink pigment particles and thus passes through and around the ink pad. Thus, the heavier ink pigment begins to cake on the inside of the ink pad, thereby cutting down on the efficiency of the machine's duplicating process.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. In order to alleviate this situation following measures are recommended.

AVCG-HG-DE-OP 11 August 1968
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 37th Signal Battalion (Spt) for Period Ending 31 July 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

1. Fill the ink reservoir with only the necessary amount of ink needed for the duplicating job to be done.

2. When the machine is not in use, always turn the pad on the rotating cylinder to an upright position.

LYNN W. WIEGAND
LTC, SigC
Commanding

1 Incl
Organizational Structure of
37th Sig Bn

SCCPV-NG-OPT (10 Aug 68) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 37th Signal Battalion(SPT) for Period Ending 31 July 1968 (RCS CSFOR-65) (RI)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 21st SIGNAL GROUP, APO 96240 25 August 1968

TO: Commanding General, 1st Signal Brigade, ATTN: SCCPV-OP, APO 96384

1. Transmitted herewith is one copy, Headquarters, 37th Signal Battalion Report, subject as above.

2. Concur in the commanders observations and recommendations with the following comments and/or exceptions:

a. Reference Section 1, para 1(e) and (f): 21st Signal Group is experiencing an overall critical shortage of MOS 36E, 72B and 72C. Internal readjustments have been made so that no one unit is affected by shortages more than another. Diversions of 26L, 31M and 52B to the Group by 1st Signal Brigade should ease this situation during the month of August 1968.

b. Reference Section 2, para 2b(4)(c): Concur with recommendation as possible solution with recommendation that treated lumber be used to prevent system shut down due to replacement of rotted lumber after prolonged operation.

3. This report considered adequate.

Daniel W. McElwee

DANIEL W. MC ELWEE
COL, SigC
Commanding

SCCPV-OP-CR (11 Aug 68) 2nd Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 37th Signal Battalion (SPT) for Period Ending 31 July 1968 RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

DA, HQ, 1st Signal Brigade (USASTRATCOM), APO 96384 13 September 1968

TO: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGG-DST APO 96375

1. Subject report is forwarded in accordance with USARV Regulation 525-15.

2. The report has been reviewed and is concurred in by this headquarters.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

1 Incl
nc

WILLIAM G. SKINNER
Colonel, GS
Chief of Staff

Copy furnished:

Commanding General, United States Army Strategic Communications Command, ATTN: SCCOP, Fort Huachuca, Arizona 85613

AVHGC-DST (11 Aug 68) 3d Ind MAJ Klingman/ds/LBN 4433
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 37th Signal Battalion (Spt) for Period Ending 31 July 1968, RSC CSFOR-65 (R1)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 2 NOV 1968

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT, APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 July 1968 from Headquarters, 37th Signal Battalion (Spt).

2. Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning equipment with inadequate personnel, page 8, paragraph 2b(1). Headquarters, 1st Signal Brigade is organizing 11-500 teams for the MTC-9 and TCC-28 equipment under the DA approved reorganization of the Brigade. MSQ-73's are being included in the manning of the units currently operating the equipment.

b. Reference item concerning bypassing line filters when using TT-76 with KW-7's, page 8, paragraph 2b(2): Nonconcur. Bypassing line filters on the TT-76 will eventually cause pitting of contacts, thus increasing maintenance problems. The unit will be advised to apply MWO 11-5280-256-30/1, dated 5 May 1965.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

A.R. GUENTHER
CPT, AGC
ASST. ADJUTANT GENERAL

1 Incl
nc

Cy furn:
HQ 1st Sig Bde (USASTRATCOM)
HQ 37th Sig Bn (Spt)

GPOP-DT (11 Aug 68) 4th Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 37th Signal Battalion (Spt) for Period Ending 31 July 1968, RCS OSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 6 DEC 1968

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorsements and concurs in the report as indorsed.

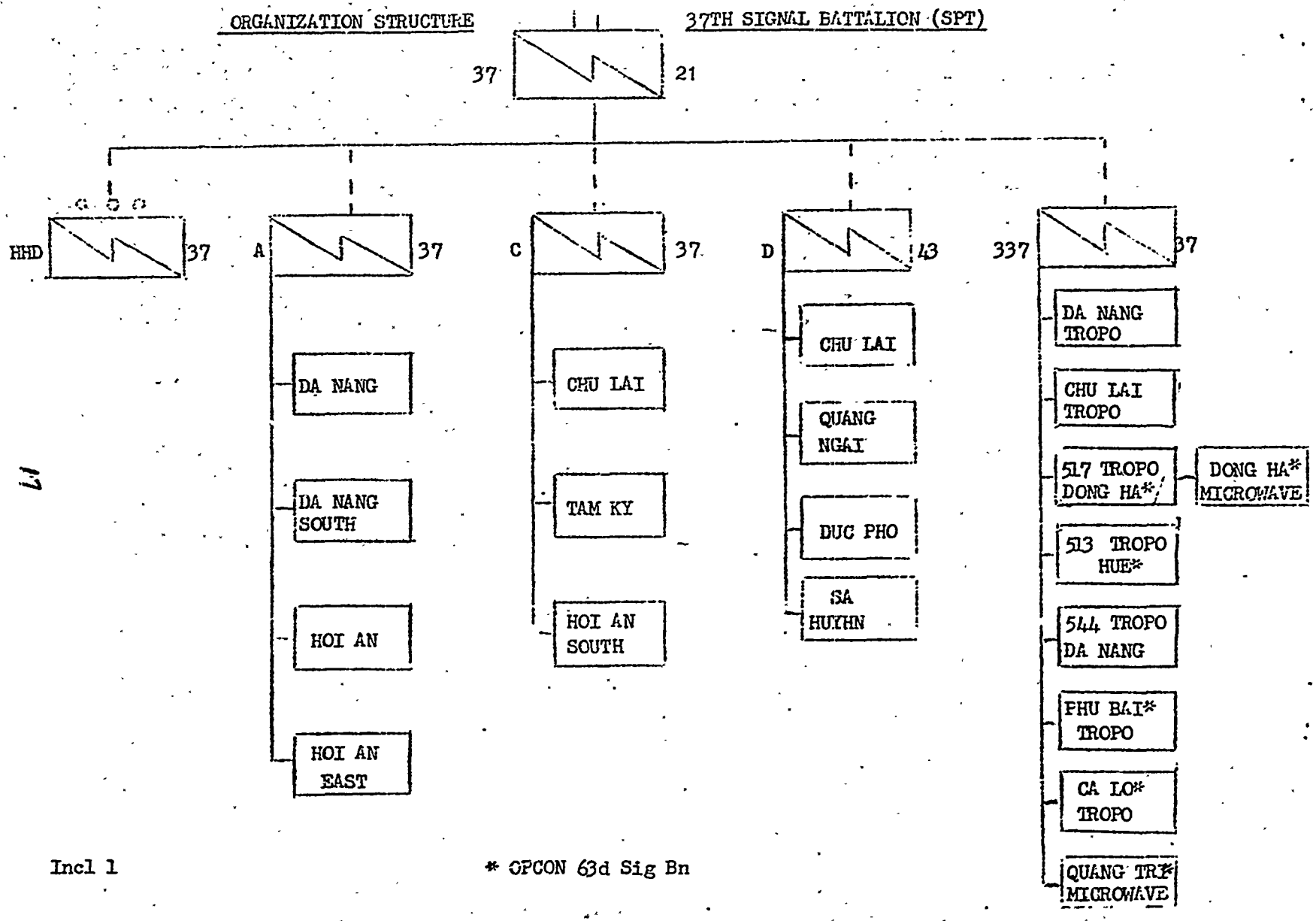
FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

1 Incl
nc

C. L. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

37TH SIGNAL BATTALION (SPT)



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* OPCON 63d Sig Bn

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5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name)
CO, 37th Signal Battalion

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13. ABSTRACT

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The following items are recommended for inclusion in the Lessons Learned Index:

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* Subject Title: A short (one sentence or phrase) description of the item of interest.

** FOR OT RD # : Appears in the Reply Reference line of the Letter of Transmittal. This number must be accurately stated.

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